



## DEVOTIONAL TIME

11-25-2014 @ 0900

**"Is It Real, or is it Memorex?"**

Acts 8:9-13

### PASS IT ON!

It only takes a spark to get a fire going,  
And soon all those around can warm up to its glowing!  
That's how it is with God's Love, once you've experienced it!  
You spread God's Love to everyone; you want to pass it on!

Join us TOMORROW for a

### SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING

at our "Chapel of Hope"  
(1X-104)

November 26, 2014

1200-1230

### Acts 8:9-13

"A man named Simon lived there, who for some time had astounded the Samaritans with his magic. He claimed that he was someone great, and everyone in the city, from all classes of society, paid close attention to him. 'He is that power of God known as "The Great Power",' they said. They paid this attention to him because, for such a long time he had astonished them with his magic. But when they believed Philip's Message about the Good News of the Kingdom of God, and about Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself also believed, and after being baptized, he stayed close to Philip, and was astounded when he saw the great wonders and miracles that were being performed."

### QUESTIONS FOR TODAY

- Remember the first time you ever saw a magician perform? Were you amazed and dazed, delighted and a little confused at the fabulous "effects" displayed before your very eyes?
- Have you ever witnessed a "mystical mystery tour", claiming wonders were accomplished "in the name of God", but left you feeling "inner disquiet", as if something wasn't quite right?
- Conversely, have you known an "hour of power" in which an "answer to prayer" appeared in a totally unexpected and gracious fashion, that left you both stunned and a little giddy?

A young minister, seeking to "spark" a struggling congregation, wondered if he could "manufacture a miracle"...employing a little "showmanship" to awaken interest in the Word of God. It would be a "harmless illusion"; he had been praying for a miracle, but God wasn't moving as quickly as he had hoped. Also, there was his "competition", a new ministry in town, claiming "miracles" were blessing every service. Now, God's Truth simply *is*...and cannot be "manufactured". The New Testament Church is still in its early stages, just beginning to establish itself as the Spirit leads. These believers quickly find that not everybody is thrilled to "get the Good News", nor does everyone understand the real Power behind the miracles they witness. Simon is a "miracle maker" who has figured out how to amaze the "common people" with some astounding magic tricks...effects so astonishing they are convinced his power comes from God, "The Great Power". Just as there were charlatans then, there are clever charlatans now. Not everyone who *claims* to be of God *is* of God. Not everyone who "performs miracles" works in the power of God. But, as in Simon's day, modern people can be just as easily led astray by what appears to be "miraculous" power...that is, until the genuine *Power of God* manifests unmistakably. People who produced recording tapes years ago sponsored a commercial in which they asked, "Is it real, or is it Memorex?" Today, we need to ask, "Is it God, or illusory magic?" The people of Samaria thought an agent of God was among them, but Simon wasn't the real deal, (though he did give a "good show"!)

God, grant us the Grace of True Discernment! In Your Spirit, may we judge wisely the "sources of power" competing for our allegiance! Teach us to recognize the "genuine article". Help us wait willingly in Your Presence, O God, praying until Your Holy Spirit fills us with Power! Only then will we truly and ably go "all in" for Jesus Christ as "signs and wonders" follow!